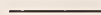


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IN MEMORIAM.



REV. JOHN NEWTON FORMAN.





Memorial
Minute
adopted by
the Board of
Foreign
Missions of
the
Presbyterian
Church in the
United States
of America,
December 17,
1917.



IN the sudden death of the Rev. John N. Forman on November 24th at the Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh, the Board recognise that the mission cause in India and throughout the world has suffered an immeasurable loss. In recording its grief at the death of one of its most beloved and revered representatives it desires also to express its estimate of the character and influence of one of the most devoted and richly fruitful lives of our generation.

John Newton Forman was born in Amritsar, India, on July 11, 1863. His father was Charles William Forman, who went to India as a missionary of the Board in 1847, and was one of the founders of a pioneer work in the Panjab, the creator of the work of Christian education in India beyond the Sutlej, the intimate friend of John Lawrence, a tireless preacher of the Gospel, and a missionary of the apostolic and heroic mould. Five of Charles Forman's children returned to India as missionaries to continue and enlarge the work of their father.

John was educated at Wabash College, where he took his pre-

paratory course and the Freshman year, and at Princeton College, where he was graduated in 1884. The next two years he spent in Princeton Theological Seminary. In 1886 the first of the summer student conferences was held at Mr. Moody's invitation, and there the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions began with the declaration of missionary purposes by one hundred of the 251 students who had assembled at Mount Hermon. The following year 1886-87 was spent by Mr. Forman, accompanied by Mr. Wilder, in visiting the colleges and universities of the U.S. and Canada in the interest of this movement. And hundreds of missionaries all over the world to-day and thousands of students in Canada and America look back to that year and to the influence of John Forman as the beginning of their real life. From his great earnestness and the controlled passion of his utter loyalty to Christ and to the cause of Missions, young men and women caught such visions of love and duty as have never faded away. At the tidings of his death the memory of his face and his pleading voice will come back to those men and women in all lands of the earth, and they will thank God again for all that his life has meant to their lives.

After this year among the students of our educational institutions, Mr. Forman, instead of returning to the Seminary, felt that he ought at once to go out to the

mission field in order to help those who had enlisted for the missionary work to realize its urgency and importance of instant fidelity to the missionary purpose. He was accordingly appointed by the Board and sailed for India in January 1887, and was at once located at Fatehgarh, and shortly afterwards at Jhansi.

Not long after undertaking his work he became convinced of the advisability of attempting to do away with the social gulf between native and foreigner, and in order to reach the people in the most intimate way he surrendered his missionary salary and his foreign mode of living and went to dwell among the people in the bazar, living in a native house and eating native food. The Board and the Mission cordially assented to his experiment and asked only that he should retain his full relationship to them both and feel free to return to his former status and mode of living at any time if it should be found desirable. After a fair and conscientious experiment with the plan which he had adopted, Mr. Forman resumed his work and manner of life of the other missionaries, having found the exclusively native diet impossible from the point of view of health and vigor, and having determined also that nearness to the native people is a matter of sympathy and understanding rather than of dress and mode of living.

In the years since, Mr. Forman has given himself in unwearied service in various

stations of the North India Mission. His love for the people and their response to his love, his perfect command of the native language, his untiring zeal and his evangelistic fervour, his knowledge of the Gospel and his power in its presentation to the heart and conscience of men, his humility of mind, his fearlessness and courage, the visible evidence in his life and upon his face of the presence of the Holy Spirit of God made him a missionary among a thousand. There was not a preacher of Christ in India more faithful and fruitful and to our human sight more indispensable than he. In every part of his missionary work he set a true example for all. He disliked the discussions of method and finance and the mechanics of committee work and organization, but he filled all his assignments with full and uncomplaining fidelity. His life and spirit were a constant embodiment of the meekness and gentleness and also of the strength and power of the Saviour whom he loved and served.

John Forman illustrated, too, fully the second of Goethe's principles "without haste, without rest." He was busy in hot season and cold season alike in India, and when at home on furlough he never ceased his work. Either among the educational institutions, looking for new missionaries, or in the churches, or, as on his last furlough, among the Indian peoples from the Panjab on the Pacific Coast, he was

ever diligent in business. It was only too evident when he met the Board at the dinner given to him and Dr. Ewing and Dr. Wanless on November 16th that he was overdrawing his strength. The end came as he would have wished it to come, while busy in his Master's work. Now at last to him who would never rest upon earth has been given the rest that remaineth on high.

The Board records its grateful love of his memory, its thanksgiving to God for all that he achieved, for his holy example and his faithful work, and it prays that other men may be raised up in America and in India who will serve with his rare devotion and come to his rich reward.

In forwarding the above Minute of the Board of Foreign Missions, Mr. Robert E. Speer, Secretary of the Board, writes of Mr. Forman:—

“I think there is no one who has more occasion to be grateful to him than I have. I owe to him more than to any one else my interest in the foreign missionary work and the complete upheaval of my life plans.”

“Thine was the seed-time; God alone
Beholds the end of what is sown;
Beyond our vision weak and dim,
The harvest time is hid with Him.”

Minute passed
by the North
India Mission
at a Memorial
service in the
Jumna Presby-
terian Church,
Allahabad, on
Sunday,
October 13th,
of which
Mission Mr.
Forman had
been a Member
for
thirty years.



HE lapse of nearly a year has not affected our sense of loss as a Mission and as individuals in the death of our trusted leader and beloved friend, John Newton Forman. He was a man of keen but kindly wit, and of a rare discernment. He was not over eager to take part in debate, but when he did speak he was listened to in the assurance that he had gone to the root of things. His intuitions were accurate, and his reasoning still more so.

He was an eloquent preacher—the eloquence not only of clear thought and choice language, but of tremendous and masterful earnestness. The reason was not far to seek. He was a man of profound conviction, especially in regard to God's word. The Bible was God's touch on his life; and he not only responded to the touch but reproduced it. He brought God home to other hearts.

He was a man of rare humility. He did not know his own greatness. He never asked for anything for himself. He accepted great tasks but never sought for great honours.

Above all, he was a man of God because he was a man of prayer. He talked to God as constantly and as confidently as he listened to Him in His word. To "pray without ceasing" was not a far-off ideal to him. All through the years he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. That he should pass at a single leap from the world of shadows to the home of shadeless glory—from the "glass darkly" to the "face to face"—seemed only natural. It was scarcely a leap for him—only a step.

And we—we grasp our swords more firmly and press forward more purposefully, for a warrior from among us has been crowned a victor. We are not only better men and women for having known John Forman, we are surer of God, surer of Christ's atoning death and glorious return, surer of the triumph of the Kingdom. Death is swallowed up in victory!

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, for your fellowship in the Gospel, from the first day until now."



Minute of
the General
Assembly of
the
Presbyterian
Church in
India.



ONE of the most impressive features of the recent Assembly meeting in Nagpur was the reading of brief minutes in memory of ministers of the Church who had passed away since the previous meeting in Lahore. While the members stood in solemn silence, Mr. Wilkie Brown, Convener of the Committee appointed to prepare the minutes, read as follows:—

And what shall be said of John Forman?

It seems so recently that he was with us, kindling in us a new faith and vision in connection with the Forward Movement that we find it hard to believe that he has gone from our sight into the presence of the King. He dwelt there habitually, and to meet John Forman was to be aware of a spirit whose dwelling place was Christ. You could not see him without feeling that he had just come out from the Master's room to hold converse with you for a time, and that presently he would return thither for further communion. To many of us who met him for the first time the words involuntarily occurred: "There was a man sent from God whose name was John."

Sent—yes, without a doubt—sent to help to inaugurate that great organisation that has touched young life round the whole earth, the

Student Christian Movement, and sent again to help to rouse and to direct the movement that is stirring in the Indian churches, the Evangelistic Campaign, the issues of which are yet far-off. Dates and localities in such a life have so little place that there is no need to set them down when we think of him. The beauty of the Master whom he so loved and served has, like a rapture, withdrawn him from our fellowship on earth. May we be so drawn by that same vision that men shall see the Master in us as we saw Him in the eyes of John Forman.

“For all the saints who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest,
Alleluia!

Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might,
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight.
Thou in the darkness drear, their own true Light,
Alleluia!

O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as thy saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold,
Alleluia!”



